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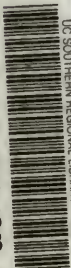
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SONGS OF AN AIRMAN



GEOFFREY WALL



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SONGS OF AN AIRMAN

Dear Laura

Dear Laura

East Boston



GEOFFREY WALL.

SONGS OF AN AIRMAN

BY THE LATE
GEOFFREY WALL
ROYAL FLYING CORPS

WITH A MEMOIR
BY
L. A. ADAMSON
HEADMASTER, WESLEY COLLEGE, MELBOURNE

MELBOURNE
AUSTRALASIAN AUTHORS' AGENCY

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TO GEOFFREY WALL

He will endure. The weary sobbing sea,
The passion of the moon, the evening breeze,
The fine clear sunlight with its sadness, these
Shall all, for all time, bring him near to me;
Our last thoughts lived unsaid; for even tho'
They seared white-hot for utterance, they were spent
Without disclosure. We were then content
To trust each other, perfectly to know:
And now the endless days that we must spend,
The days of hardness, and of aching doubt,
The days of lapsing fineness—till without
This one true friend, we stand and face the end;
And yet—the certainty of him! That seems more sure
Than Death itself. I know he will endure.

HAROLD HUNT

6000 feet. - Over Gloucester,
am supposed to be observing
on a cross country flight to
Rencombe. - 50 miles.
For $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour we have
been rolling up England
at 80 miles an hour.
- Following the Fosse Way,
- It is directly below us
now. - grass grown, &
edged w' trees, but still
unmistakably a Roman
road. The country looks
exactly like a huge chess
board. - Over Putbury
now -
Later. Getting horribly cold
- Flying into clouds at
8000. - Steering by
Compass &c.

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MEMOIR

MEMOIR

"After breakfast I had a heart-to-heart talk to my tailor and came back in all my war-paint. I looked an awful kid in it, too; I suppose I am, for that matter."—Letter from A. G. N. Wall, dated May 11, 1917, three months before his death."

ARTHUR GEOFFREY NELSON WALL was born at Liscard, Cheshire, on March 3, 1897. His father, Mr. A. E. Wall, having been appointed manager of the Australasian branch of the London and Lancashire Fire Insurance Coy., the family came to Melbourne early in 1907, and in April of that year Geoffrey Wall entered the Wesley College Preparatory School. At the beginning of 1911 he was promoted to the "big" school, and in 1912 he paid a visit to the old country with his parents, returning to Melbourne at the end of the year. The following three years he spent at Wesley College which he left in December, 1915, to proceed to the University, where as an undergraduate of Queen's College he passed the first year of the Arts course. In 1915, while still at school, he had tried to enlist, but had

failed in the required chest measurement. He had taken a course of physical culture to remedy this, and as soon as he had completed his University year he sailed for England with the object of entering the Royal Flying Corps. After considerable difficulty with the War Office he succeeded in gaining his ambition, and, after a course of training at Denham and Oxford, obtained his "wings" in June, 1917. He was killed in an aeroplane accident at Netheravon on August 6, 1917.

These are the brief facts of Geoffrey Wall's life, and it might be enough to let his verses speak for themselves without further introduction, were it not that the author himself was from an educational point of view an interesting "human document." He came from England to an Australian public school, a small, lean, brown "nipper," full of imagination and of the sense of romance derived from contact with old and beautiful things such as we have not here in Australia. He found himself in a school society which had been working out the problem of reconciling the English public school ideals to the needs of a very democratic community. In this aristo-democratic atmosphere Geoffrey Wall found himself at home, but in the development of his character Australia itself had no small share; and his home, one must believe, a greater one than either college or country. But weighing influences is a task better left alone. He says himself of his education in writing to his father:

Yet again I ought to thank you for an education which has not qualified me for a single thing, but has left me capable of qualify-

ing for almost anything. The main thing about education is not the facts one learns, but the whole mental outlook. As far as facts are concerned I know hardly anything; "Little Latin and less Greek," as Ben Jonson remarked; more literature than I thought, and a little psychology. There are, I think, the materials for quite a sound education if I ever get a chance to take it up again (and by the time this war is over I shall be comparatively old and grey). One does feel the advantage of a little "savoir" in mixing with all sorts of people, and I think it makes me more adaptable.

He was not one of those boys who delight the hearts of schoolmasters by passing examinations easily, except in subjects which he liked. He was, perhaps an argument, as Macaulay was, against the stupidity of "compulsory subjects." But he was one of that happily increasing class of boy that combines mechanical ability with literary taste. At seventeen he built a motor-car himself, in which he had the temerity to start for a country tour, and though he never shone at cricket or football or rowing, he had his measure of success at long-distance running, in which his indomitable courage told. I spoke of his "temerity"; he says himself in a letter: "It seems almost impossible that a mere contraption of wire and wood should get the better of intellect. That is what I always felt with a car or a motor-bike. In a tight corner I always said to myself, 'You're a man—MAN; this thing is but iron and wood,' and I always got out again all right."

No schoolboy could have sounder views on the ethics of sport than he had, as is shown in his "After the Boat Race, 1914." The six associated public schools of Victoria meet annually each May in the "Head of the River

Race," the only race in the world in which six schools compete in eights. In 1914, after a run of five victories, Wesley College was beaten and Geelong Grammar School, "the azure blue," became "Head of the River." Wall's lines so exactly expressed the right attitude of vanquished to victors that they were at once included in the Wesley College Song Book to the tune of "The King shall enjoy his own again." His lines on the 1915 Boat Race, when Wesley regained the title, "Head of the River," are again characteristic of his sportsmanlike attitude; no word of victory—only the appreciation of the struggle and of the scene on the river banks so dear to generations of Victorian public school boys, past and present. In both cases his voice was the voice also of his school. So, too, his lines in December, 1915, "On Leaving School," must find a response in the heart of any loyal son of any "Best School of All."

The twenty-six poems selected for inclusion in this volume are arranged chronologically; nine of them were written in 1914 at the age of seventeen, and eleven belong to 1915; the remaining six were the product of his year at the Melbourne University. The Council of Queen's College, in a resolution passed after the news of his death came, referred to his literary promise as follows: "He had only been a student at the College for one year, but had even in that short time warranted the highest hopes for his brilliant success in the world of letters."

So far as is known he wrote no more poetry after leaving Australia on his last voyage in November, 1916,

but had he lived through actual war experience he would, no doubt, have found expression again in verse. His letters show that he considered that he was going through a period of test which would prove whether he could write or not, and they contain passages which are really prose poems in themselves. "I like this," he says, "because I don't like it. I take a savage sort of joy, that is, in being uncomfortable, because, for one thing, I shall always be able to appreciate luxury and feel that I have a right to be as comfortable as I can be henceforward evermore. And there is another point of view—it is part of my trade. The idea I have is that I am pruning my imagination for a few months so that it will either die altogether or come out of the ordeal stronger than before. Either of which might be a good thing!"

His earliest poetic efforts in 1913 showed how, as a boy of sixteen, he had fallen under the influence of Kipling, but like most very young verse-makers his metre occasionally halted. On the advice of the writer he undertook a serious study of metrical rules and of that elusive art of rhythm by which the great song writers make their verses sing themselves into music. His first attempt was called "The Pioneers," and the second verse runs:

So we slip through the sea in liners, where our fathers dipped under
sail;
We roar across half a continent, where our fathers blazed the trail:
But the earth is growing smaller—they have altered the human
race;

They have girded the world with cables, they fling their thoughts
through space.

Yet some, he says, there be who "search for the side
track places, that are never mentioned in books."

And sometimes they find what they search for, in a nightmare of
sun and sand,

And they stagger after a mirage, till they die on a pitiless land.

And sometimes they find what they search for, 'mid the peaks
where the grizzlies roam,

Or the shimmering reef of coral, that lifts through the smoking
foam.

And one there was who found it, 'neath the waving southern lights
Where he strove in the cause of science, through the long Antarc-
tic nights;

He died in the great white silence (the English know how to die),
But he scrawled in pain, on the Scroll of Fame, words that will
never die.

These lines were written shortly after the news of that
very gallant gentleman Captain Oates's end, the story of
which must have touched whatever chords of expression
a schoolboy writer struggling for expression had. I have
quoted from these verses freely, as a comparison with his
later work will show his development towards greater
originality of thought and greater metrical ease. Com-
pare, for instance, "The Road" with its effective use of
the double metre to heighten the impression of the motor-
car speeding out of the night into the dawning, and
staying for a while at Stonehenge before taking the white
road that "smokes from the touch of our wheel" and
that "gleams like the finger of destiny."

Most of Wall's verses of 1914-1915 were published in *The Lion*, a school magazine "by the boys and for the boys," which came to life in 1914. Of the small but enthusiastic band of early writers in *The Lion* two others besides Geoffrey Wall have already made the supreme sacrifice: Angus Mackay, eagerly volunteering to take the place of a sick man in a dangerous piece of night duty, and Malcolm Stirling, leading his men into the jaws of death through the barbed wire of a German trench.

Geoffrey Wall came to Wesley College as one of the English of the Island who was to see England from the outside and then return to her with clearer understanding, with no less love for all that is comely and of good report in her, but with a clarity of vision which the wide spaces of Australia and the freedom from convention here must give to every young Englishman who, with an equally acute sense and imagination, is subjected to the same educative influences. I quote himself to illustrate my meaning:

The best education isn't to learn things, it is to forget them. Everybody starts with an amount of prejudice and convention which must be got rid of before they can see things properly.

I mean so many people like things as a matter of course. The railway train, for instance, is to them merely a way of getting about, when it should be a miraculous example of the "artifex," grey iron, bottled sunlight—and human brains. It's rather difficult to explain it, but really as the Scriptures say "unless one becomes as a little child" one can't see things as they are.

It is ever so much more interesting to regard Chester Cathedral, for instance, as more than a sacrifice raised in past ages to "the

Unknown God.'" I was reverent in it, not so much because it was a church, but because to me it meant hundreds of sunny mornings, and the clink of tools, and the shouts of the builders, and more than that, because it was the fulfilment of the dream of some man who saw in his mind the whole magnificent pile as it stands to-day, but who never lived to see his vision realized. You see, the architect and a hundred lesser artists (for they were artists in those days, and not mere workmen and machines) must have often wandered through it and looked with a sort of awed pride on the wonderful thing their skill had brought forth. It didn't matter a hang to them whether it was going to be a church or a castle, they only knew that it was an expression of something they didn't understand, something that was beautiful and fitted into the Whole of Things. The man who conceived the roof of the choir and the nave, for instance—flimsy stone columns, leaping like flames, without a single capital or ornament, to meet in a pure Gothic arch, 130 feet above, was a greater artist and a better man than the whole race of Deans, who but for a tablet behind the altar, would have been long ago forgotten.

His love for what is beautiful and venerable in his motherland is shown again in the following extracts from his letters of 1917:

Always Oxford is beautiful. I like it in the afternoon when it looks like some sleepy old Spanish town having its siesta, and in the early morning when there is nothing about but dogs and milk carts. But it is in the evening, when the sky is a soft beryl colour from Magdalen to Christchurch, and the whole place is faintly reminiscent of thousands of such sunsets, that it is best of all.

He was quartered at Jesus College, Oxford, with the R.F.C. Cadets there, and thus describes it:

We have our meals in the great old dining hall that was built in Elizabeth's reign.

It is rather wonderful at dinner to look up at the rows of past celebrities hung on the oak panelling and lit up by a huge old fire-

place that has been burning big logs every night for three hundred years. And it is even more peculiar to watch the little group of boys in khaki standing around it afterwards, and talking in a hushed way, as if they were afraid of waking something. And afterwards, you stumble up quaint old stone staircases, that seem all angles and turnings in the dark, and are worn down by the feet of generations of students, and you fall over the crooked stairs, and swear softly in the darkness—just as Locke and Macaulay stumbled and swore—and then you go to bed (two to a room, and *real beds*) with a last glimpse of the moon on a bank of clouds behind the clock tower, and Tom Tower telling its 101 strokes in the distance.

In another passage we have the brain pictures of his boyhood's verses in a new setting. Writing from near Bristol during a later part of his training in June, 1917, he says:

Yesterday evening I wandered out into a darkening county to look for trouble—walked miles along a narrow white road between hedgerows that must have taken centuries to grow, and where Somerset dips towards the Bristol Channel—suddenly grows greener if that is possible. A couple of ruts meandered westward thro' miles of pink and purple air, and eventually dived mysteriously into a wood. A glade (archaic sort of word that just describes it) ran steeply down into lost Lyonesse, and presently the last trace of a track ran out in a tangle of greenery and logs. It was very still, and underfoot the ground was very squashy. Overhead, through a roof of interlacing boughs, the evening sky, painted from passionate red to reminiscent green with purple edges. In five minutes I was beautifully lost, in a maze of black and green aisles that all led nowhere; so I sat down on a log at one end of an open hollow in the trees and waited for Lancelot to come crumpling through the ferns at the other end of the glen.

I don't know how long I sat there. After ripping through the air behind eight howling cylinders all day, it was like dropping back to the comparative restfulness of the Middle Ages, when men hacked each other about with steel instead of "doing each other in"

with Lewis guns. The light seemed to trickle out of all the sky into one violent green streak low down in the west—then that too dimmed and turned purple, and the grass was blocked black and white with moonlight. Lots of little night things came out and squeaked and hooted. Lots of other things came out, too. Once I saw something that might have been Robin Hood, standing very tall and green at the far end of the glade, with an unmistakable long bow in his hand. And once a very tired knight-errant came slowly up the glade (have you ever noticed how moonshine glitters and glances on armour?). And once I heard the chink-chink-chink of rapiers, and down a vista of moonlit ferns, saw two white-shirted individuals prancing around each other with what looked like a piece of solidified moonlight in their hands.

I suppose I must have fallen asleep, for the next thing noticeable was coldness, and everything covered with dew, and a most obvious silence over everything. So I went to look for a road or a castle, or whatever might be there, and after a while stumbled out of the trees and into a farmyard—full of barndoor and shadows, and a large woolly dog who informed the county of my presence.

Elsewhere he expresses his enthusiastic admiration for Rupert Brooke, “who always says what I would have said if I had had the ability to say it.” His particular appreciation of “The Great Lover,” by Brooke, is significant of Wall’s own mind, as the following lines of it will show:

These I have loved:

.

Wet roofs beneath the lamplight; the strong crust
Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;
Rainbows; and the blue bitter smoke of wood;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,
Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon;
Then the cool kindness of sheets that soon
Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss
Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is

Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine.

It is not difficult to see in Geoffrey Wall's letters and poems the appeal which these lines would make to him.

But if he felt to the full the beauty of England there are times when his Australian outlook predominates as in the following passage:

What matters far more is that a road runs from Birmingham to Stafford, and for the first five miles thro' cobbled narrow streets where jammy-faced babies crawl in the gutters and slatternly-looking women howl at each other from 2 x 4 houses. For the last five miles it runs thro' similar scenes, but beautified in this case by hideous smoke stacks and blast furnaces, that cover everything with a layer of soot. Here groups of wild men—savages of the underworld—hang around the pubs on the corner and policemen walk up and down dispersing them. But between them is 30 miles of Watteau-like landscape—long stretches of sunny uplands and moors, full of sunlight and gorse with a road like a twisted ribbon dropped across, over which one drones like a big bee, "open wide"—and beyond these are hills and corners and delightfully unexpected haycarts just around them, and little dreaming villages and always a distance—and no one in sight.

And this is wrong somehow. For if the poor devils in Walsall and Newcastle could get into these wide, windy places, quite a lot of social problems would be settled. And again it isn't the fault of the aforesaid poor devils, but of the excellent gentlemen who have would-be-old mansions with a lodge to match, far enough away from the factories. That, you see, is significant.

There is no doubt that he gained in pictorial power while in England. If no other evidence were forthcoming his description of his flight into a Wiltshire storm in June, 1917, would be sufficient:

When I had finished with Devizes I looked up and was charmed to see the sky ahead the colour of ink. I turned at right angles and tried to get round it, but it hung like a sinister curtain and blotted out everything round, so I put her nose down, turned up my collar, and drove into it. Just before I got into it I looked round and saw one of the most weird pictures I shall ever see. Only Doré could have done it justice. Behind it, half way up the sky, hung a strip of Salisbury Plain, like a view from a narrow window. The plain hung like a conventional picture of heaven—half way up the clouds, and bathed in dark yellow sunlight and peace, miles on miles of rolling downs, with shadows between them. Then a storm came down with a crash, and I stuck my head under the cowling and hung on to a “joy-stick” possessed of several devils. Above the noise of the engine I could hear the roar of the rain on the planes, and the machine bucketted and bumped like a W.D. lorry. From 2,000 I couldn’t see the ground, and below that I was nearly bumped to Hades. I dived, and had a momentary vision of a most desolate landscape, with trees all bending in one direction, and sheets of rain howling across it. For the next ten minutes I lived vividly and strenuously—my principal interest in life being a speed indicator that danced from thirty-five to ninety miles per hour, and a bubble in the spirit level, that spent most of the time in one corner of the dashboard. I had time for one more impression, for right in front of me was a prismatic compass, and reflected in the prism, I could see against a background of black clouds a tail-plane supported apparently by nothing, and in front of that again, a muffled demonic looking figure in a mask and helmet, with great goggle eyes like a fish—altogether more like a nightmare picture than a budding “bird-man” (see *Daily Mail*). This, I remarked to the shrieking sky, is I suppose what I left home for—fool—yet I wouldn’t have missed it for a lot. Presently the earth became dimly visible and the clouds thinned out, and in five minutes the storm was booming and flashing behind me. Looking back, it was even more terrifying than from the front. Then I drifted gently over Bath, and wandered over half Somerset to miss another storm that hung invitingly over Bristol.

I have quoted largely from his letters to his own

people ; from one point of view his letters to his father are very remarkable. I do not think that an English boy educated at an English public school could have written so openly and intimately as he did, or with such an assured confidence of being understood. The traditional reticence of the English public school man would have made such talk impossible. But I have read so many letters from Australian boys at the front to their fathers and to their mothers dealing quite openly with the temptations that beset every soldier that I am more than ever convinced that the typical Australian boy speaks to his elders with the *naïveté* not of ignorance but of innocence, when he does so speak of subjects usually slurred over. If he sometimes startles his elders by an apparently easy equality of speech he does not mean to be pert, but the attitude comes naturally to him in a democratic air which forbids him to be "afraid with any amazement." Old countries veil facts more than young ones. Much has been written of the temptations offered to Australian soldiers in English towns ; and thus Geoffrey Wall wrote of them to his father: "Frankly the thing does not appeal to me—not in the way it is done in Oxford, anyhow. For one thing, it seems to me to be such a sordid way of taking the primrose path, and for another, I have always had vague theories of the mastery of mind over matter."

In the avoidance of the common or unclean it is difficult to weigh what influences go to make up the high and saving quality of fastidiousness. Some deep, perhaps

unrecognized, religious feeling in most cases certainly; certainly also an instinctive shrinking of finer souls from that which is ugly; a subtle mixture of the Hebraic and Hellenic motives, as Matthew Arnold might perhaps have said. But whatever the underlying influences, would God that all our soldiers might in this matter be "as that young man was."

The verses here printed are mostly schoolboy efforts, but even as such they show that in Geoffrey Wall we have another instance of the young lives of great literary promise which this war has devoured. It is not perhaps too much to speak of him as an Australian Rupert Brooke, for he had many of the same qualities and of the same possibilities. A fearless and fastidious personality, with the insatiable curiosity of the young and ardent spirit that must taste all and prove all, he gave his future to the death that perhaps he himself would have chosen had it only been in battle with England's foes.

"A soaring death and near to Heaven's gate,
Beneath the very gates of Paradise."

L. A. ADAMSON.

Wesley College,
Melbourne, October, 1917.

SONGS OF AN AIRMAN



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT

April, 1914

NOT by frantic party strife,
Not by self-sufficient scorn,
May we mould a nation's life,
Not by such are Empires born.

After these shall rise a race
Calm, and sane in law and word,
Born to peace, but quick to face
Threatened peril with the sword.

Free from fear of priest and crown,
Trammelled not by jealous creed,
Not by hoary custom bound,
Shaping laws unto their need.

All the Briton's sturdy brood,
Toned by milder tropic skies,
Realize the brotherhood
Dreamt of through the centuries.

Great in art, and great in power,
Circled by the wind-swept seas,
Reaping Nature's untold dower,
God shall smile on such as these.

"THE CALL OF THE ROAD"

May, 1914

*H*AST heard the call of the Open Road,
The lure of the great white highway,
The dusty ribbon of twisting track,
The charm of the leafy by-way?

Hear then the Call of the Road!

There's a call of the road in the early morn,
In the first red streaks of day,
While the dew's still wet on the glistening blade
And the mists still low on the way.

There's a call of the road in the fading dusk,
In the softly falling night,
When the way seems new, and the road seems
strange,
In the arc of a white headlight.

There's a call of the great white empty road,
There's the drone of the speed-made gale,
There's the shriek of the racing engine,
And the reel of the swaying trail.

There's the one supremest moment
When you know why you were born,

Like a half-quaffed draught of nectar,
Like a taste of the rose-tinged dawn.

Hark then to the Call of the Road!

*Hast heard the call of the Open Road,
The lure of the great white highway,
The dusty ribbon of twisting track,
The charm of the leafy by-way?*

“YE OLDE ROMANCE”

May, 1914

*THEY have sung you of old romances, of rapier and
powder and ruff,
They have written of earlier happenings, and sure they
were strange enough,
But the song I would try to sing you is of a later age;
A song of the Man and the Artifex, the machines that
Man has made.*

.

Of a glinting stretch of metals, a distant rising
drone,
A glimpse of glowing engine, smoke-box and stack
and dome,
The string of lighted Pullmans, the click of a clos-
ing rail,
The swaying, fading tail-light, the track of the
Midnight Mail.

Of the trembling, rumbling racer, the ribbon of
empty trail,
The pulsing roar of the engine, the drone of the
speed-made gale;
The crouching, goggled figures, the wind that cuts
the breath,
The eddying, smoking dust-cloud, the track of the
Driven Death.

Of the slowly sinking liner, a threshing, crippled
wreck;
The fires drawn and flooded, the slanting, crowded
deck;
The lurching wireless cabin, the hissing, crackling
spark
That flings the frantic message across the troubled
dark.

Of the youngest and swiftest science, the strain-
ing, cambered plane,
The thrust of the great propellers, the Mind that
holds them tame;
The swooping, dipping volplane, the planes that
warp and bend—
The reeling, wheeling landscape—the crash, and
then . . . the End.

Of these, though the men who made them scarce
knew what they had wrought,
Shaping the fierce brute metal, with pain and peril
fraught,
To each perchance a vision beyond ambition's goad,
The song of the locomotive, the call of the open
road.

*They have sung you of old romances, of days when
the world was young,
Of knights and ladies and gallants, of many strange
things they've sung;*

*And Romance—it passed with chivalry—forever dead
and gone,
But in spite of steam and petrol, Romance has still
lived on.*

AFTER THE BOAT RACE*

June, 1914

THE race is rowed. Along the banks
The frenzied shouting dies away.

Slowly disperse the thronging ranks,

The azure blue has won the day.

Though not to us—past conquerors—

The Fates decreed the hard-fought race,

We cheer the blue—the better crew,

And own defeat, but not disgrace.

“To love the game beyond the prize,”

To glory in the struggle keen,

To know the spirit that defies

The issue,—if the fight be clean.

To feel the trembling, leaping eight,

The quick drawn breath, through clenching
teeth,

To battle gamely to the end,

Though not to wear the laurel wreath.

And so defeat may have its use,

And by its aid in other years,

A younger crew may row anew

To win success 'mid other cheers.

And should their utmost efforts yield

Once more the fate of second place,

We'll cheer the blue—the better crew,

And own defeat, but not disgrace.

*See Appendix.

WILBUR WRIGHT

August, 1914

BECAUSE he did not toil for gain,
Although Fame took him unawares,
Because he laboured long in vain,
And heeded not the sceptic's jeers:

Because he shaped into his needs
The burden of an age's thought,
And proved by many daring deeds
The wisdom of the truths he taught:

Because he did not fear to die,
But never, heedless, courted death,
The first of all his race to fly,
To flout the air that gave him breath:

Because of these his name shall sound,
Till, gleaming like a comet's tail,
Across the dark that knows no bound
We ply the "Inter-Planet Mail."

For these his memory shall not die
Till, out of Armageddon's murk,
Comes droning down the lurid sky
The fateful end that crowns his work.

BELLUM LETHALE

August, 1914

THE long black hulls that split the seas
asunder,

The restless spears of light that sweep the skies,
The rifle's crackle, and the cannon's thunder,

The burning villages and orphans' cries,
Blind hate that shells an ancient town unsparing,

Fury that decimates the helpless crowds,
Malice that shatters monuments uncaring,
Science that deadly drips death from the clouds.

So this is War? "The Day" to which you
toasted

Is come at last, and now you wish it gone.

So this the vaunted "Kultur" that you boasted,
And this the cause that sped your armies on!

Ye judged that England's sword was sheathed
for ever,

That she must fall a victim to your greed.

Ye little thought that she would stand together,

That civil strife would cease before her need.

But instant to the clarion call of danger

That overhung the old grey Motherland,

To break, for once and all, the threatening
stranger,

The Empire leapt to arms at her command.

Not as your own ephemeral, blatant Empire,
Built in a day to vanish in a night,
Her destiny was cast for something higher
Than to be crushed before your petty spite.

Across these blood-drenched sods for generations
The tragedies of Europe have been played,
And now the Armageddon of the Nations
Is passing—and the world looks on, dismayed.
Yet ne'er before in history's varied story
Across these plains so fierce a fight has raged,
Nor all the armies here who strove for glory
Have e'er before such awful Warfare waged.

Though through the easy years we safe had
slumbered
In sheltered Peace, till War was but a name,
Still, when the distant diapason thundered,
England again revived her ancient fame.

Though not to every warrior may be given
That last mad charge that shakes the solid earth,
When, knee to knee, with shell and shrapnel riven,
The thunderous line rides down to prove its
worth,
Yet in the ghostly hours before the dawning
It needs a colder fortitude than these
To hurl, without a gleam of light or warning,
Ten thousand tons across the mine-strewn seas.

Though vanished, 'mid the smoke and Maxim's
rattle,
The flashing mail and panoply of yore,
Still through the nightmare horror of the battle
Shines something of the stern Romance of
War.

And you, whose puny pride has plunged your
Nation

And half a world in blood and strife and pain,
And scattered broadcast Death and Desolation
Upon your brow should flame the brand of Cain.
You planned and wrought and laboured for the
future,

The cycle of the ages has revolved;
And this will fling your fabric back to Nature,
And sink it to the prime whence it evolved.

Yet, far beyond the roar and oaths and crashes,
The wreck of Nations, when the strife shall
cease,
May, phœnix-wise, from out the blackened ashes,
Arise the flag of Universal Peace.

THE OFF-SHORE WIND

December, 1914

THERE'S a whisper through the city, where
the crowded traffic roars,
There's a scent of tar and seaweed on the breeze,
For the Off-Shore Wind is sighing of the coral-
circled shores
And the painted tropic cities that it sees.

For the Off-Shore Wind is calling (tapered masts
above the house-tops),
Till the strange talk of the wharf-side wakes
the sleeping "wanderlust":
Till you leave the roaring city with its canvas-
backed conventions,
With its narrow streets and smoky skies and
dust.

The well-known coastline melts away where sky
and water meet,
Hull down on the horizon, then a smudge
against the blue,
The salt Pacific breezes whimper round you cool
and sweet,
And the white wave trails behind you from the
smother of the screw.

For the Off-Shore wind is calling (trailing smoke
against the sky-line),
And a sheet of molten silver leaping from the
driving prow,
Spotless decks that slant to leeward, rusty plates
and wind-whipped cordage,
And the gurgle of the water underneath the
leaping bow.

And when this act is closing, and the watch is all
but ended,
You will hear the wind that calls you, though it
be o'er half the world,
Though the craft be old and leaky, and the gear
be torn and bended,
You will take a ghostly pilot, and the sails will
be unfurled.

For the Off-Shore Wind is calling (arching sail
athwart the sunset),
Deepening shadows on the water—twinkling
stars above the mast,
Gleaming lights across the twilight by the en-
trance of the harbour,
Till the battered sea-worn traveller has reached
his port at last.

MOONSHINE

“The Prophet of the Utterly Absurd,
Of the Patently Impossible and Vain.”

THERE'S a land that many look for,
There's a country few can find,
For the gates may only open
To the True, the Pure, the Kind:
And no one is ever perfect,
And all of us doubt at times,
And the land of Fairie Fancies
Is a land that knows no crimes.

But sometimes you'll glimpse that country
In the cloud-flecked purple west,
When the Gates of the Night are opened
And the Sun has sunk to rest.
You can see its shady castles,
You can see its sloping lawns,
From gleaming steps and fountains
You can hear those elfin horns.

And still if you stand on some headland
In the fading after-glow,
And you watch the fiery pathway
That the Sun has traced below;
If you watch through half-shut eyelids
You may see those gates flung wide,
Those gates of gold and ivory—
For a moment peep inside.

And sometimes you can feel it
In the orange-scented twilight,
By a softly-playing fountain
Splashing in a marble bowl;
And the air is filled with Magic
That comes drifting down the moonlight,
And the Magic of the place and hour
And moonlight fill your soul.

The soughing trees above you,
And the dew-drenched turf below,
You are very near the border
Of that land that none can see;
For the veil of misty moonshine
Hanging dim between the present
And the land of Fairie Fancies,
Is as thin as it may be.

*All the never-painted pictures,
All the never-chiselled statues,
All the never-published poems,
All the things that never were,
All the great things, all the good things,
All the half-felt aspirations
Every wish of every age
And every noble thought is there.*

NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1915

“And the moon was full.”—*Tennyson*.

AND so the year is dying in the night.
Another moment with its hopes and fears,
Another instant with its smiles and tears
Is passing to its fellows as I write.
Perchance, amidst the musical moonlight,
Across the valley of forgotten years,
Another stood; and watched the rolling spheres
That cleft the purple heavens in their flight;
And pondered on the meaning of it all:
But here the moonlit hours flow softly on,
Unheeding that o'er half the World a pall
Of unthought sorrow lies; and peace is gone
From many homes; and many men must fall
Before the dawning New Year dies anon.

December 31, 1914, 11.45 p.m.

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

March, 1915

SO, as the streaming night was on the wane,
Above the rattle of the tropic rain
On the tin roof, they caught the sound of hoofs
Hard ridden through the storm; and then a light
Flashed through the water by the latticed pane,
The door flew inward and from out the night,
His tunic running small cascades, he came.
The nurse was standing by the narrow bed,
Yet spake no word. He gazed a space
Then, all at once, it seemed he understood,
And gulping back a cry, he bowed his head,
And stared a moment at the calm, white face,
Then raised the dainty hand, so limp and chill,
And then he went, and softly closed the door.
Only the gleaming pools upon the floor
Showed where he stood.

She lay so still.

He took his horse from off the sleepy 'sais'
And thundered out into the howling night
And rode, unmindful of the path or pace,
Illumined by the lightning's lambent light,
To where, across the storm, ten miles away,
His bulging dam-head held the floods at bay.
Flinging himself from his foam-lathered steed,
He toiled giganticly 'mid grimy men,
Waist-deep in sluicing water, till the need
Was over, and the straining walls had robbed

The seething waters of their human prey,
Then, as the east was heralding the day,
He sank his head between his hands and sobbed.

ISLANDS OF THE BLEST

April, 1915

BLUE water, ruffled by the breeze,
And merging towards an azure sky,
Flanked by red cliffs, dark draped with trees,
That darker spots of shade supply.

A white sail, spread against the blue,
Tacking away beyond the pier
To catch the zephyr winds anew,
And past the sky-line disappear.

Ah, spreading sails athwart the skies,
Bear onwards past the world's blue rim,
For just beyond Adventure lies;
The Islands of the Blest begin.

Perchance some lurid tropic dawn
As, followed by the breeze, you flee,
You'll sight some fairy isle forlorn
Lifting from out the sun-streaked sea.

Or on some silver moonlit night,
When surf along the coral sings,
You'll spy the treasure isle where light
The pirate brig at anchor swings.

And yet the Islands of the Blest
Are empty dreams, as far, as fond,
Hung in the sunset-crimsoned west,
But always they are just beyond.

Wide skies, the winds of all the seas,
Run out the sheet and tack again
For port, the far Hesperides,
Then round the world and back again.

TO——?

April, 1915

ON some cold star, too high and far
For mortal man to reach,
Aloof she dwells, and there compels
An offering from each.

With sweat and prayers thro' desperate years
Man toils her will to find.
At last perceives a gleam that leaves
A darker gloom behind.

A world apart, some call her Art,
By some she's named Romance,
And some will claim no other name
Than sordid Circumstance.

A few—how few!—her secret knew
For which man vainly strives,
Through years they sought, then dearly bought
And paid her with their lives.

They scarce had quaffed the nectared draught,
And known the heart of things,
Before they died, e'er they descried
Such songs as no man sings.

.

Nor may we know her here below,
Too far she is, and high.
Only in dreams we catch those gleams
To light us till we die.

REQUIEM

June, 1915

FOR those who in the turmoil of the fight
Have paid the price of victory, and died,
Who lie upon a distant shore, wide-eyed,
Beneath the mystery of an Orient night,
We mourn. Yet ne'er their service can requite,
That they should lightly set their lives aside
So others might in heedless safety bide,
And never know the ravening War fiend's blight.
Yet not in vain that final sacrifice,
For where Australia's sons have shed their blood,
The petty bickerings, that 'neath peaceful skies,
The people's weal, the Nation's wealth withstood,
Shall cease; through sorrow Unity shall rise.
There shall Australia come to Nationhood.

HEAD OF THE RIVER RACE, MAY 7TH, 1915

August, 1915

FLUTTER of ribbons and flicker of sunlight,
Ripple of water and rustle of reed,
Languidly lifting the folds of the banners
(Many must fail if the one must succeed).

Now is the day when the murky old river
Wakes for an hour of tumultuous life;
Out in the stream, where the blades bend and quiver,
Oarsmen are nerving themselves for the strife.

Sudden a stir and a low, sullen mutter
Slowly increases and runs down the shore;
Far up the north bank a cloud of flags flutter,
Loud rise the cheers to a deep-throated roar.

Now is the test of the best that is in you,
Training and toil of the weeks that are sped;
Brace every muscle and nerve every sinew—
“Dip! and again!” and the eight shoots ahead.

Far under stranger skies may you remember,
Glimpse this again down the vista of years,
Flutter of ribbon and flicker of sunlight,
Long blur of banks and the dull roar of cheers.

THE SECRET OF THE LEAVES

August, 1915

THE tree-tops wave against an azure sky,
The zephyrs sway the branches to and fro,
And now and then the stronger breezes blow
And stir the gloomy pine-tops with a sigh.
A trivial thing, and yet the reason why?

I think that countless centuries ago

I lay and watched the branches waving so,
And felt the warm south breezes breathe and die

Away among the hills, or stir the grass
Upon some sunny upland by the sea
(The blue Greek sea), and watched the shadows
pass

And heard the sheep-bells tinkling on the lea,
(That was some thousand years ago, alas!)
Knee-deep in the long grass of Arcady.

ANGELINA

October, 1915

THERE'S a maid called Angelina (yes, a very
hackneyed lay)

And although I've never seen her, it's just possible
I may.

She is very nearly perfect from her pigtail to her
toes,

But who she is, and where she lives, the dickens
only knows!

Her eyes, I think, are violet, her hair it might be
brown,

But I'd rather fancy gold for Angelina's crown.

She is very fond of Kipling, doesn't giggle when
she speaks,

And she looks you square between the eyes, and
never faints nor shrieks.

She's not much good at cricket, but at tennis she's
a dab,

And she might be worse at rowing, for she's never
caught a crab.

Though she dances most divinely, she is every sort
of sport,

For she drives a lispig monster of the mile-
a-minute sort.

I've never met the maiden, so I don't know if she's
real,
Perhaps it's better so, for she might shatter the
ideal;
So I'll keep her on a pedestal, where coloured
candles shine,
And worship on occasions at my Angelina's shrine.

Oh! you couldn't do her justice, in either verse or
prose,
But who she is, and where she lives, the dickens
only knows!

S.S. "VOLTURNO"

' 11 p.m.

FROM the howling, wind-bit blackness of a
wild Atlantic night,
From the dripping ice-wreathed aerial by the dipping
masthead light,
To the swaying wireless cabin, where between the
sickening rolls,
He hears in the trembling head-piece the message:
SAVE OUR SOULS.

3 a.m.

Through the dripping, dipping fury of the smoking
green-backed seas,
By the oilskin'd group by the charthouse, where
the flapping dodgers freeze,
To the shriek of the madden'd piston, and the
roar of the tortured steel,
Through the raging rain-split tempest, to another's
help she reels.

7 a.m.

By the light of the chilly dawning, o'er the heaving
oil-soaked seas,
To the ribboned string of bunting that flaps in the
falling breeze,
From the ring of watching vessels the boats ply to
and fro,
To rescue the survivors from the blackened "Vol-
turno."

THE ROAD

December, 1915

*A RUINED temple 'gainst the whitening East;
The hush of morning, and an empty road;
A droning speck that quickened and increased
Into the radiance, careless of its load;
Above the landscape lying still and wide;
Here is the meeting-place of old and new,
Here where the dawn winds blow and naught beside,
Silence, the dawn, the gleaming road—and you.*

“Wings of the morning” into the dawning,
Red burns the skyline and grey lies the way,
Lifting and roaring, distance devouring,
Out of the night, on the edge of the day,
Out of the past with its darkness and mystery
Into the future aglow like the sky,
Hold we the magic, the heirs of all history,
Over yon summit the long levels lie.

Leave to the poet the song of the nightingale
Thrilling with passion her leafy abode,
Ours is the freedom of high heath and darkening
vale,
Utter blue distance, and long open road.
Speed! while the old sunlight flames in the heart
of it,
Speed! with a hint of the vastness of space,
Speed! till the music of each maddened part of it
Blends in a marvel that mocks time and place.

Speed! But the vision will not come again to you,
You clasp at a shadow and follow a gleam.
One moment more and the thing would be plain
to you,
Death but a phantasy, Life but a dream.
Cease! Why pursue an illusion so frantically,
Thought, word defying—just caught—sooner
flown.
Here where some demi-gods builded gigantically,
Rest for a space on this moss-covered stone.

.

*And was it here once, in the long ago,
On some warm evening of an earlier world
We sat; and in the mellow afterglow
Watched the warm wonder of the west unfurled?
A city stood where blow these daffodils,
These, and the road, are all that still remains
Ribbon-like, lessening to the far blue hills,
But—somewhere on these stones we carved our names.*

*We talked about the same old foolish things
As old as human thought, yet ever new,
Rebellion, and those helpless questionings
Of Whence and Why and Where, until the blue
Faded to violet, and the stars decked out
The heavens like a gem-flecked canopy,
So strange and clear it seems—and yet you doubt
If we who speak are they—or they were we.*

Still gleams the roadway as when the centurion,
Far, far away down the vista of years,
Stood by this arch, while below him the sunlight
shone,

Rank after rank, down the waves of the spears—
Lingered for one moment more in the shade of it,
Turned for that last, longest glimpse of his
home,
The white little group, 'neath the great colonnade
of it,
Then to the Eagles, and southward to Rome.

Still gleams the road, like the finger of destiny,
Climbing the moors till it melts to the skies,
As when, some dawn, in dead days of chivalry
Launcelot came glittering over the rise.
Wide is the World and its marvels are near to him,
Giants to be conquered, and wrongs to redress;
Strange portents guide him and visions appear to
him,
Westward he fares into far Lyonesse.

Each fleeting glimpse of Romance do we owe to
thee,
White road, that smokes from the touch of our
wheel,
Meetings by moonlight, and vows whispered low
to thee,
Thunder of hoofs and the ripple of steel.

White road, that runs like a thread through the
centuries,

Leading us on, by the old magic drawn,
Into that far-away land where adventure is
Over the hilltops and into the dawn.

And so they passed along the shining way.

*The distance took them and they came no more—
Each to his gods—and with them the array*

That panoplied the bright Romance of yore.

Nor may we, on the far horizon, watch

The magic towers of Archimag's abode.

Nor, halting by this ruin at nightfall, catch

A glint of armour down the moonlit road.

THE RETURN

December, 1915

SOLDIER, back from the distant fray,
With the bandaged arm and the ribbon gay,
Where have you been so long away,
And what have your travels taught you?
The changing, curious crowd sways by,
But you watch it pass with a vacant eye,
And ever anon you heave a sigh,
As some hidden memory wrought you.

The city street is bright with flags,
But, besides your wounds, your footstep drags.
Is your mind fixed on those leaden crags
And the dead you left behind you?
You have done as much as a man may do,
Though you could not stay to see it through.
Is it only this? Or tell me true,
Are there shadows that remind you?

"Oh, I've followed the colours, God knows where,
And I've witnessed things that I can't declare,"
He said, and, despite his martial air,
A sudden terror filled him.
"But over there on Gallipoli
There's a nameless grave by an azure sea
(And I couldn't tell what his rank might be),
I only know I killed him.

"I know 'twas a case of his life or mine.
Somehow I'd strayed from the transport line,
And sudden, topping a parched incline,
 I saw him right before me.
The Turk was just as scared as I,
He didn't think to move or cry,
So we stared for a moment eye to eye,
 While a wave of fear rolled o'er me.

"I'd a fleeting thought of the wife and child
That he'd left behind. Then the beggar smiled,
And something about it made me wild.
 He smiled—and I pulled the trigger.
. . . And so he swayed a little space,
While the slow smile faded from his face
And then he tottered from his place,
 And sprawled—a ghastly figure.

"I stood with the smoking rifle, so—
'Neath the white hot sky, with the sea below,
And the shrivelled grass waved to and fro,
 And those sightless eyes seemed peering
Out past the skies with a cold stare set.
So limp he lay—I can see him yet—
And his twisted face I can never forget—
 Reproachful, cold, and leering."

“L'ENVOI”

December, 1915

EXAMS. are done, and in the sun
The grey old building lies.
Softer than dreams, each grey tower seems
To prop the azure skies.
Time to beguile, we'll sit awhile
And sentimentalize.

So I suppose, next time we meet,
You'll think yourself a man,
Since Tuesday evening will complete
What Lower Prep. began;
And then—what is it Milton says?
“Fresh woods and pastures new!”
For each the parting of the ways.
“Good-bye, good luck to you.”

But now you're looking rather glum;
I thought you understood.
We always knew it had to come,
And rather wished it would.
But now there's just a hint of pain?
You've got to say adieu.
You feel you'd like to start again?
“Good-bye, good luck to you.”

The turmoil of the common room,
The musty smell of ink,

The tedious, blazing afternoon—
Such little things you think,
Such little things, and yet you feel
How close to you they grew,
How years of them have left their seal.
“Good-bye, good luck to you.”

Yet not the end of everything—
Some things we take away ;
Though some aren't worth remembering,
Some memories will stay.
A “something” higher than we thought
And deeper than we knew—
The things that text books never taught.
“Goodbye, good luck to you.”

Still shall the mellow sunlight sleep
Across the empty quad ;
Along the wall the shadows creep ;
The dusty ivy nod.
Still the old bell the hours shall tell
(Yes, mine's a kola, too)—
Not sentiment, of course, but—well—
Oh, hang !—here's luck to you.

.

Still true to thee shall each one be
Where'er he wandereth ;
And, scorning fame, shall play the game.
Altho' the prize be death—
A cairn of stones, or bleaching bones,
To show the breed was true;
And tho' they die, their souls shall fly,
Old School, once more to you.

THE HORN, MT. BUFFALO

February, 1916

SUNLIGHT and silence, and the open sky,
And utter distance merged in misty blue,
Where brain-pervading breezes breathe and die
And view succeeds infinity of view.
Far may you wander 'mid the hives of men,
Where smoky skies to roaring streets respond,
Yet through the glare and glamour glimpse again
Sunlight and silence—and the hills beyond.

THE REALIST

April, 1916

THE road like a ribbon, dropped across
An empty plain ;
A wonder of wattles that dance and toss
A golden rain.
Across the haze that distance fills
Cloud shadows fall,
And beyond, a hint of far blue hills—
And that is all.

All but a trembling shadow, thrown
Intense across the dust,
Black as for aye it has been shown,
Has been, and ever must.
The withered grasses shake and nod
By lazy breezes fanned.
A cart-rut in the dust! Good God!
The sunlight—and the sand.

MELODRAMA

April, 1916

THEY tell me it is Love! Good Heavens!
No!

The sordid pathos of the picture-show,
Or aimless walks on Sunday afternoon,
And conscientious spooning 'neath the moon!
It makes the world go round? It may be so;
But not that sort of thing. Good Heavens! No!

Only I know that in a nameless land,
In some baronial castle we shall stand
Together on the shield-emblazoned stair,
And watch the fire-light on old armour flare,
Hear the long thunderings that cannot drown
The tumult of the sacked and blazing town,
And when the doorway bulges to its fall
The bolt shall speak four times across the hall.
Yes, halfway up the staircase we shall stand,
Then we shall go exploring, hand in hand.

REVERIE

August, 1916

BLUE hills,
Blue sky,
So might one lie
Eternally,
And watch the shadows creep,
And hear the river murmuring by,
The distant bush birds' chiming cry,
And warm, scent-laden breezes sigh
The sunny fields to sleep.

FRAGMENT

(On an old Clock in the Melbourne Museum)

October, 1916

ON a dusty ledge in the vista'd hall
The quaint old time-piece stands
'Mid a medley of lace and porcelain
And the tarnished glories of Louis' reign,
Where looted temples adorn the wall
With gods from distant lands.

And the hurrying, heedless passer-by,
On work or pleasure bent,
May glance at the bland old face for long
Enough to note that the time is wrong,
And beneath, the legend may catch his eye,
"French, Early Eighteenth Cent."

But the silver bells have long been dumb,
At least to mortal ears,
And the massed wheels have ceased to run—
Was it only a gleam of the wintry sun
That flamed on the burnished pendulum
And lit the shadowy years?

Where have the ticked-out minutes gone,
 Freighted with joy or pain?
 Tales of the pleasant land of France,
 Breathless moments of pure Romance,
Yet the hour and the word and the deed passed on,
 Lingered nor came again.

Ah, long-lost hours of fire-lit gloom
 That the rusty hands have told;
 Ah, words that might not have been said
 Before the last of daylight fled,
And the firelight painted the silent gloom
 With blots of black and gold.

What tragic stories could you tell
 If we only understood,
 Of 'ninety-three? Oh, were you there
 When the torchlight rapiers held the stair
Till, one by one, the rearguard fell
 And the steps grew wet with blood?

SOMEWHERE

October, 1916

SOMEWHERE a voice is singing,
Over the twilight moor,
Out through the darkness ringing,
 Calling the ghosts of yore.
Somewhere across the gloaming
 Radiant and fair she waits;
After the toil and roaming
 Wide lie the gates.

Somewhere the wind is sighing
 Low to the empty night,
Over waste headlands crying,
 Moon waters bright;
Somewhere the voiceless singer,
 Somewhere the viewless wind,
Moonlight and magic linger,
 Love lurks behind.

Somewhere.

(From the Wesley College Song Book.)

(Music by L. A. Adamson. Arranged by A. L. Niehlerlein.)

Some - where a voice is sing - ing. Ov - er the twi - light
Some - where the wind is sigh - ing. Low to the emp - ty

The first system of musical notation for the song 'Somewhere.' It consists of three staves: a vocal melody in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal staff.

moor,..... Out through the dark - ness ring ing,
night,..... Ov - er waste head - lands cry ing,

The second system of musical notation. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are written below the vocal staff.

Call - ing the ghosts of yore..... Somewhere a - cross the
Moon..... wa - ters bright..... Somewhere the voice - less

The third system of musical notation. It concludes the song with a final vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal staff.

gloom . ing Radiant and fair she waits.....
sing . er, Somewhere the view . less wind.....

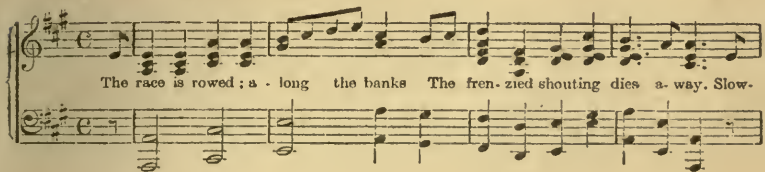
Af - ter the toil and roam ing..... Wide lie the
Moonlight and mag - ic lin ger..... Love lurks be .

gates.....
hind.....

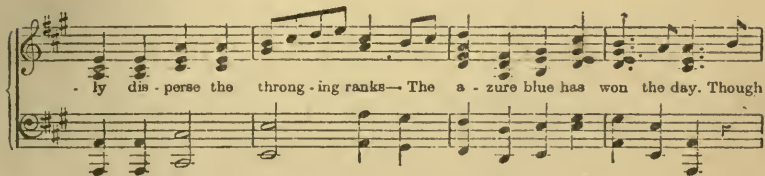
APPENDIX

AFTER THE BOAT RACE, 1914

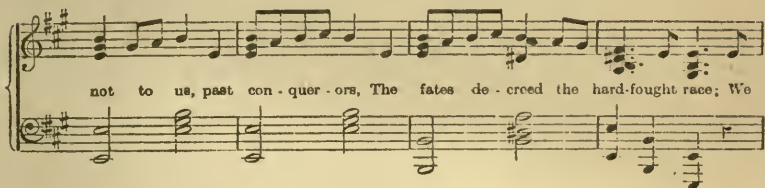
From the Wesley College Song Book. Tune: "The King shall enjoy his own again," A.D. 1643



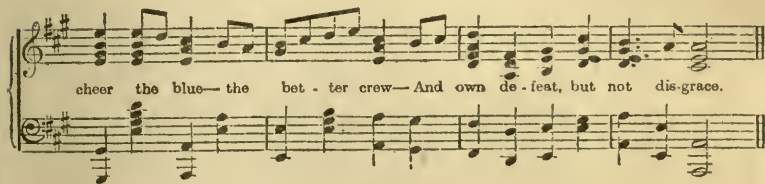
The race is rowed; a - long the banks The fren-zied shouting dies a-way. Slow-



- ly dis - perse the throng - ing ranks—The a - zure blue has won the day. Though



not to us, past con - quer - ors, The fates de - creed the hard-fought race; We



cheer the blue—the bet - ter crew—And own de - feat, but not dis-grace.

II

III

"To love the game beyond the prize,"
To glory in the struggle keen,
To know the spirit that defies
The issue,—if the fight be clean.
To feel the trembling, leaping eight,
The quick-drawn breath, through clench-
ing teeth,
To battle gamely to the end,
Though not to wear the laurel wreath.

And so defeat may have its use,
And by its aid, in other years,
A younger crew may row anew
To win success 'mid other cheers.
And should their utmost efforts yield
Once more the fate of second place,
We'll cheer the blue—the better crew,
And own defeat, but not disgrace.

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